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EDUCATION FOR AGRICULTURE

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There is no justification for any form of education which does not give to its possessor a greater efficiency. Any type of education that diminishes to any extent whatsoever the ability of a student to perform the practical duties of citizenship is a menace to the state. Educational institutions supported by federal or state governments must be able to demonstrate that they are competent to train men and women for every useful and important duty which will be required of them as American citizens. It will surely follow as night follows day that those institutions which are most successful in demonstrating their efficiency in training men and women for a more successful and useful citizenship will ultimately enjoy greatest favor from the far-sighted statesmen whose wise plans look forward to the perpetual development of our free institutions.

The agricultural colleges of the United States have enjoyed a period of unexampled prosperity in the past fifteen years. These institutions are peculiarly the wards of the state. There are no great privately endowed colleges of agriculture. These schools of learning must, from the very nature of things, have appealed to the representatives of the people as fulfilling a great fundamental mission in training for useful citizenship. Were it otherwise we would not have seen the large appropriations, first by the federal government and later by practically every state government in the United States. These appropriations are increasing and must continue to increase if the college is to meet even in a small degree the constant demands for help from the farmers, who are continually depending upon us for the solution of the many complex problems in agriculture.

The success of an educational institution is measured by the efficiency of its graduates. The graduate is asked not "how much do you know, but how much can you do? How well can you use knowledge acquired?"

If this test is applied to the graduate of the modern agricultural

college how well does he respond to the trial? The demand for agricultural college graduates as farm managers, teachers, investigators, dairy experts, veterinarians, expert judges of corn and live stock and forestry experts is increasing yearly, as these institutions are able to point more and more to the successful careers of the men who have enjoyed the training given there.

The supreme test of efficiency applied to an engineering school is the measure of success it attains in graduating great engineers. The greatest product of a law school is the great lawyer. The supreme and ultimate test of the value of an agricultural college training is the ability of the graduate to successfully achieve in agriculture as a vocation. It is a hopeful indication of the soundness of our educational policies that an increasingly large number of men go back to the farm, and there as elsewhere are they demonstrating that a college education may add to one's ability to perform the practical duties of citizenship and thus give some small return to the state for the training provided by a generous commonwealth.

But an agricultural college is not only a professional school, it is also a great scientific institution. In it must be trained that large body of teachers and investigators whose services are now in such great demand throughout the world. This phase of the work of an agricultural college has not yet reached the development its importance demands. Greater attention must be paid to the training of men for fundamental research. Graduate courses must be offered and the fullest opportunity must be given for the development of the spirit of investigation in students and faculty. This alone can vitalize the whole spirit of an institution and is justified from the standpoint of the certain results to be achieved for the science of agriculture.